

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Published Since 1877

Responses & prayers continue...

Hope keeps building for Peru missionary family

MEMPHIS (BP) — Five months after a car accident on a mountain road in Peru, Nancy Watts hasn't given up hope that her healthy family will return to Peru as missionaries.

She bases her hope on her faith and continued answers to prayers.

Marcus, 10, who suffered a head injury, will enter school this fall at his regular grade level. He still has some physical problems, such as the use of his right arm and

leg and full recovery of his speech, but he played baseball this summer, his mother proudly reported.

Joshua, 7, will be out of the brace securing his broken leg and ankle in a few weeks. He also played baseball this summer. Nancy's broken facial bones and hand are nearly mended.

There's also plenty of reason to hope for her husband Wade, who received a head injury and broken ankle, Watts said. Just

recently, he communicated to a therapist with eye motions that he has two children, has a master's degree, and had been in a car accident in Peru.

So while Nancy and the boys are visiting Peru for a couple of weeks, they won't be saying any "last goodbyes," she said.

The trip will allow the boys to see neighborhood friends and missionary friends. Nancy and the boys will attend the annual meeting of the Baptist missionaries, and they will attend a prayer meeting for the family hosted by the Peru Baptist Convention.

Nancy is anxious to see their pastor — who is president of the convention — and his family.

"They're real close to our family. It will be good to see the people, too, from around the country," she said.

There will be lots to see, Nancy explained, because Wade, as director of missions for the convention, made a lot of friends.

"He has a very good rapport with the nationals. He loves them and they love him," she said.

The family has received letters and calls from many of their Peruvian friends, she said. She has heard reports that the Baptist churches in Trujillo, Peru, their hometown, have held a prayer service for the family each Thursday night since the accident.

Also, the churches in Lima, Peru, have held a prayer meeting for the Watts.

The response from Americans, especially Tennesseans, also has been encouraging, she said. Before the Watts began their missionary service almost 10 years ago, they were active in Royal Ambassador work, serving as Tennessee RA camp leaders several years.

She has received thousands of cards, many prayergrams, and gifts of money from

churches. Some of the money gifts went to help her buy a car, she said. The school which Macon Road Church, Memphis, operates has provided Joshua's tuition and will provide it for the upcoming months. Leawood Church, Memphis, is providing its missionary home to the family and has given them a food shower.

Highland Heights Church, Memphis, which Nancy and Wade consider their home church, held a garage sale, the proceeds of which were a gift.

What has surprised her is that the responses continue, Watts said. "It's very encouraging to me that people are still praying for us and still have us in mind. And I tell Wade that, too."

She visits him every day, only missing a few days since the accident. Although in a comatose state some of the time, he has recovered from pneumonia and other minor infections and his ankle is mended.

"I think he understands everything. He just can't respond verbally yet."

She hopes she will have more time soon to supplement therapy he receives at a skilled nursing care facility in Memphis. Marcus will attend therapy sessions three days a week until school starts, when it will provide therapy.

All of her family has been changed by the accident, she said, and during the recovery time in 10 different health-care institutions.

Nancy said Marcus, who was introverted, has become extroverted, which is characteristic of people who suffer head injuries. Joshua has changed the least, except he is responding to the changes in his family. Nancy has adopted the role of "single mom." She said she has learned "you just depend on God. I do a lot more than I did."

"Sometimes I feel like I'm alone, but I just remember that God is with me."



Foreign Mission Board missionary Nancy Watts pitches a baseball to her sons Joshua (center) and Marcus (right) in Memphis. The three of them will soon return to Trujillo, Peru, for a visit to their home church there. Nancy's husband Wade remains hospitalized in Memphis after a car accident five months ago left him with a severe head injury.

Mark it down

When Richard Ross began his youth ministry career two decades ago, he quickly learned about the attention span of teens — he rarely talked with them about events more than two weeks ahead of time. "If I did, they would just shrug their shoulders," said the youth ministry consultant at the Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) in Nashville. However, today's teens are much different, he recently pointed out. "A lot of the older youth start pulling out their planning notebooks or calendars to make sure they don't already have something planned. It's a different world. For good or ill, their lives are much more programmed," Ross said. The BSSB is seizing the opportunity to roll out "Student DayMaker," one of the only Christian planning resources aimed at the youth market. In addition to regular calendar features, the planner includes Scripture, evangelism helps, a religious glossary, and information on Southern Baptist youth-related projects. Ross calls the planner "the perfect resource" for schedule-intensive young people. BSSB can customize Student Daymaker with special logos or church names for groups that buy in quantity. For more information, contact Bill Craig at (615) 251-2761.

The next generation

A new generation of Southern Baptist missionaries is taking to mission fields all over the world with a new face, according to statistics from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) in Richmond. Working around a globe that is dramatically shrinking due to jet airplane service, computer networks, and direct satellite broadcasts, missionaries are more likely to be single or ethnic than ever before — and willing to take chances for the cause. "They feel drawn to the cutting edge. They want to go to places where there are no other missionaries and life is hard. They want to go where the need is greatest — even into dangerous, uncharted waters," said Lloyd Atkinson, FMB director of personnel selection. Of the 246 long-term workers appointed in 1995 by FMB, 93 went to countries closed to traditional missionary activity or to countries where communism and sanctioned atheism has collapsed. "This is a significant, encouraging trend. God is calling people to these new opportunities, and we can look at their lives and see how God has prepared them. That says to me that God knew a long time ago that these doors would open, and he began preparing them to serve," said Atkinson.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Twenty-six members of Hardy Church, Grenada, camp for a searing summer week without electricity or running water in order to witness to Navajo native Americans living in a remote desert area outside Farmington, N.M.

20 years ago

A huge crane stands ready in the background as ground breaking ceremonies mark the beginning of the multi-million dollar construction project to rebuild Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian, destroyed by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

50 years ago

For the first time ever, Mississippi Baptists gave over \$1,000,000 in the first six months of the year to causes outside the local church. Leading churches were First Church, Canton (\$104,444); First Church, Jackson (\$31,745); and First Church, Meridian (\$23,266).

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

WILLIAM H. PERKINS JR.

Where I stand

The Lord does indeed work in mysterious ways.

As I chart my spiritual and professional journey (and I've done a lot of that in the past couple of weeks), I have been alternately awed and lost in thought over how the hand of God has guided me to this point.

Growing up in First Church, Belzoni, I remember my beloved Sunday School teachers often saying, "You love the Lord so much, I believe you're going to be our 'preacher boy!'"

Yet, since I was 12 years of age I have felt the strongest calling to be a print journalist — a newspaper man, in the parlance of another era.

Looking back, I find it far from coincidental that I asked Jesus into my heart that same year.

I have often wondered, through the decades and the several jobs since then, exactly what the Lord had in mind for me. At times, his

will was obvious. At other times, the future seemed rambling and unfocused.

I always found security, however, in the knowledge that God was guiding me and that it was my finite vision, not God's unlimited foresight, that sometimes went out of focus.

It is with that confidence that I accept the sacred trust that is the editorship of **The Baptist Record**.

Great men of enormous faith have occupied this position over the past 119 years.

The newspaper's founder, Mississippi pastor and Civil War veteran J.B. Gambrell, was also instrumental in the birth of **The Baptist Standard**, the weekly newsjournal of Texas Baptists and currently the largest-circulation state paper in the Southern Baptist Convention.

He also served four terms as president of the Southern Baptist

Convention and was the first executive of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

In 1919, editor P.I. Lipsey led the financially-daunting campaign to purchase the Harding Building on Capitol Street in Jackson to centralize the burgeoning work of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The campaign succeeded, and the Harding Building became the first Baptist Building.

A.L. Goodrich, editor during the dark days of World War II, made several rail trips to Washington, D.C., to battle the War Production Board for enough rationed newsprint to keep **The Baptist Record** in circulation.

Although the War Production Board seldom approved such requests, Goodrich always came home with an allocation sufficient to keep the newspaper in the hands of Mississippi Baptists.

FOR THE DETAILS
ON THESE STORIES,
READ YOUR
BAPTIST RECORD!



As I sit in this comfortable Baptist Building (the third one, by the way), certain that my career won't be interrupted by civil war and with the surety there will be enough resources to print next week's issue, I want you to know that I am aware of the enormous responsibility given to me by God and by you, the loyal readers of **The Baptist Record**.

I want you to know that although we may disagree on editorial matters from time to time, I pledge to pray daily that God's

matchless wisdom, and not my temporal knowledge, be reflected in everything I do as editor of **The Baptist Record** and as a Christian in a culture that so very much needs Jesus.

I pledge to be an advocate of no cause, except the cause of Christ.

My childhood pastor, Jasper P. Neel, was fond of saying, "If you don't stand for something, you don't stand for anything."

I thought you should know where I stand.

Guest Opinion...

The church as community; the community as church

By Farris W. Smith

(Editor's note: The following is adapted from the July 1996 edition of the Simpson Association newsletter.)

Most of us have suffered with Beulah Church and her pastor, Billy Ingram (see "Racial accusations false, hurtful, claims Magee Church's pastor," page 4, **The Baptist Record**, July 11). Most have been sympathetic. Some have been critical.

However, few of us know enough to make any judgement at all. Please understand that unless you talk with the people involved, you do not know the whole story and you will not learn the whole story by reading the newspaper or watching the television.

Do not be harsh or critical until you know the truth of the matter.

An important observation needs to be cited by us all and for us all: No church is isolated any longer from the watchful eyes of the world.

One might think that what happens in a small, rural church in Mississippi might go unnoticed by the world. Ask Beulah Church if this is so!

Within 24-48 hours, (Ingram) had received calls from across the U.S. Within 72 hours, what happened in a rural Simpson County church was flashed around the world.

What the people at Beulah Church thought was going to be an uneventful Wednesday night prayer meeting fell beneath the scrutiny of our entire nation and

thrust that congregation into the spotlight.

It is unfortunate that the entire truth was not presented, but let this be a lesson to each one of us. *The church is meant for the spotlight.* It is not to blend into the woodwork. It is not to be camouflaged in its surroundings. It is light in the darkness.

The church is the visible body of Christ in a world that needs to see him. We are to be distinctive, different, and distinguishable. That is the nature of our Lord, and we are defined by him.

Too often the local church has drawn its circle around the community and taken on the identity of that community. They become synonymous.

Big Rock (fictitious name) community surrounds Big Rock Church. The water system is the Big Rock Water Association. Little distinction is drawn.

The church becomes but an extension and expression of the community — its values, beliefs, personality, and way of doing things.

"Is that bad?" you ask. Yes, both bad and dangerous. The church is not to be an expression of community but an expression of Christ — his values, beliefs, personality, and way of doing things.

When inconsistencies arise between what we teach as the church and how we live as community, we have been left unchallenged because the community is definitive.

Now the world has intruded into our community and if it sees any inconsistencies, you can be sure it will point them out to us. Whether real or perceived, no inconsistency will go unnoticed, for the world has a critical eye.

It is now apparent, as it should have always been, that the values and truths the church espouses should be consistent with the teaching of the Scripture and not with community standards.

Furthermore, what we do and practice must be consistent with what we teach from the Scriptures.

The world may not always look to the

church for answers, but the world will always look to the church to see *how* we answer.

Today as never before, no church can avoid the scrutiny of the world's spotlight. Are you ready for that light to shine on you?

Smith is director of missions, Simpson Association.



Smith

Lewis touts "Start Something New"; endorses imminent reorganization

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Starting something new must always be a priority with God's people, according to Larry L. Lewis, Home Mission Board president.

Speaking during an annual home missions conference, Lewis outlined the next two years' "Start Something New" theme, emphasizing church starting for 1997 and ministry in 1998.

"The only successful strategy for reaching America for Jesus is establishing vibrant, viable, ministering, and witnessing congregations," Lewis said. "I don't think we can look at the dire needs in today's society and say we don't need new churches today."

Examples of starting something new also include beginning a Sunday School class or starting a congregation at a housing project.

"We shouldn't start something new just so we can say we've reached our goals," Lewis said. Referring to John 4:31-35, he said Christians are in the business of finishing the work that Jesus began.

In the final years of the millennium, Start Something New should be the heartbeat of Southern Baptists, Lewis said. Coupled with an effort to share Christ with every person in the nation, he said it should be woven into the fabric of the new North American Mission Board (NAMB).

"If I'm remembered for anything during my presidency, I hope it will be for putting a major emphasis on the importance of establishing new churches," he said. The NAMB will be formed following next year's annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, merging the work of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

Lewis said he believes the reorganization will allow more missionaries to be on the field with significant cost savings. "I concur with the rationale of forming a new agency so efforts can be focused more directly on evangelism, church planting and ministry."

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FMB denounces ruling of death to Kuwait Christian

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The Foreign Mission Board (FMB) has joined a rising cacophony of voices protesting an Islamic court's recent ruling that Kuwaiti Christian Robert Hussein should be killed for his faith.

Board President Jerry Rankin June 27 denounced the ruling as a "miscarriage of justice" and appealed to all "freedom-loving Americans" to raise a cry. "We are asking believers in the United States to petition God with prayer and petition the Kuwaiti government for Mr. Hussein's safety," he said.

Human rights advocates see Hussein's case as precedent-setting in Kuwait and have called on people worldwide to mount a letter-writing campaign to Shaikh Saad Al-Sabah, Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister, and Mohammed Sabah Al-Slim, its ambassador to the United States.

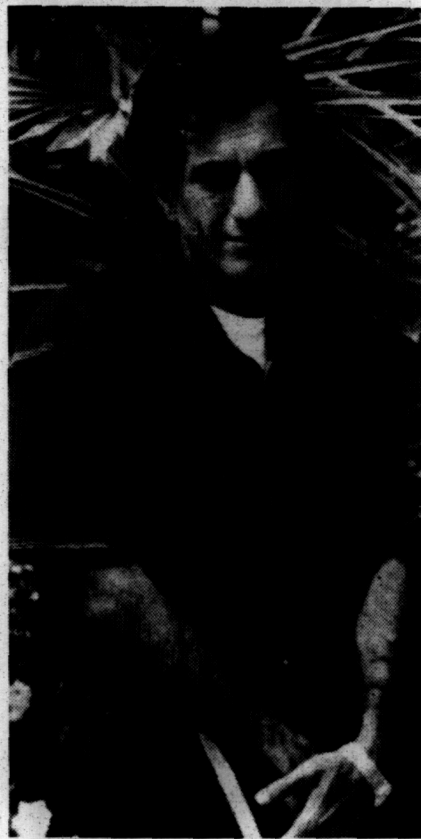
Hussein, 45 — a small, almost frail man in stature — is in hiding.

"We find it ironic that the very freedoms American soldiers sought to protect in the Gulf War are being violated through this ruthless act of intimidation by those who most benefited from our involvement in the war," Rankin said.

At the close of Hussein's May 29 hearing, Judge Jaafar Al-Qazveeni denied Hussein's assertion that his life was in danger. But in a verdict released June 8, Jaafar clearly stated Hussein should be executed by a Muslim religious leader for apostasy.

In February the court had ruled Hussein should lose his wife and custody of his two children, ages 8 and 11, at least four houses, his contractor's business, and about \$4 million in assets and inheritance. It gave him until May to repent. His refusal to renounce Jesus Christ — claiming freedom of religion based on the Kuwaiti constitution — led to the Islamic judge's latest ruling.

In recent days, a deluge of



Hussein

faxes has churned into Kuwaiti government offices, signed by members of parliaments in Canada and throughout Europe, and from congressmen in the United States. All are protesting the ruling, saying it violates international standards for individual freedom. Human rights advocates also have asked former President George Bush to discuss the matter with Crown Prince Shaikh Saad, his personal friend.

"Human rights represent a seamless garment in this world," said Don R. Kammerdiener, the FMB's executive vice president. "It's not possible for human rights to be violated in one part of the world without diminishing the concept in all of the world."

Maurice Graham, a former FMB missionary to Kuwait, called on Kuwait to defend freedom of conscience.

"The Kuwaiti court needs to support its own constitution," said Graham, who first met Hussein in March.

For a short period before the Persian Gulf crisis in 1990, Graham worked with the only evangelical congregation in Kuwait. He was among American hostages holed up in the U.S. Embassy compound for four months after Saddam Hussein took over Kuwait.

Since 1992, the Islamic wing of Parliament in Kuwait has fought for the total adoption of *sharia* (Muslim law). If he is able to stay alive, Hussein might appeal his case to government courts. That appeal would test whether Kuwait will apply its constitution over *sharia* — and protect by law a Muslim who changes religions. It would determine the future of the hundreds, or thousands, of closet Christians in Kuwait, and possibly in other countries.

Nations throughout the world are facing the dilemma of appeasing a loudening minority cry from extremist Muslims who reject the Western view of human rights and seek to rule by force. In the extremist Muslim mind-set, the government and the practice of Islam are one and the same.

"My experience with Kuwaitis is that they are people who really believe in freedom," Graham said. "That's why I feel like if it was left up to the people there, they would choose the right thing to do, human rights. It is not an extreme country. I appeal to Kuwaiti people that they would uphold their own constitution."

Hussein is a lone exception to the pattern in Kuwait that Christians remain quiet about their faith. "He felt God is issuing to him that he couldn't be a silent Christian," Graham said. "He has made it an issue. He wears a cross and carries a Bible. But he feels like it's his right as a Kuwaiti."

So far, Hussein has been unable to find a lawyer in Kuwait who will dare to take his case. Human rights advocates are asking the government to supply him with one. Meantime, they have secured lawyers outside Kuwait to help him prepare a legal appeal.

Interested people should address protests to: His Highness Shaikh Saad Al-Sabah, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, The State of Kuwait, P.O. Box 4, Safat, Kuwait 13001, and fax 965-539-7791; and Mohammed Sabah Al-Salim, The State of Kuwait, Chancery, 2940 Tilden St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, fax (202) 966-0517 and phone (202) 966-0702.



NEWS CONFERENCE — Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) leaders on June 27 condemned the plight of Kuwaiti Christian Robert Hussein, in hiding since receiving a death sentence as an Islamic apostate. Attending the news conference were (from left) Don R. Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president; Jerry Rankin, FMB president; and Maurice Graham, former missionary to Kuwait who met Hussein in March while in Kuwait for the opening of the new U.S. Embassy in Kuwait City. Graham was a hostage at the U.S. Embassy for about four months in 1990 after Iraqis overran Kuwait, triggering the Persian Gulf crisis. (BP photo by Sandy King)

SBC messengers elect Nominations Comm.

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — At their annual meeting in New Orleans on June 10, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) messengers elected two people from each of 35 state and regional Baptist conventions to serve on the SBC's Committee on Nominations.

Mississippians elected on the committee include **Phil Walker**, pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Madison; and **Evans Whittle**, lay

member of First Church, Tupelo.

The Committee on Nominations will bring nominations of Baptists to the 1997 SBC meeting in Dallas to serve on the SBC's various boards, commissions, and committees.

The committee — nominated by the SBC Committee on Committees — is made up of two people from each state or regional convention, one lay person and one in church-related vocational work.

Disney e-mail appeal sent across Internet computers

NASHVILLE (BP) — An Internet solicitation of support from homosexual activists for the Walt Disney Company has made its way from a Disney vice president's office across the country.

The electronic-mail (e-mail) message, which originated in the office of Disney Vice President for Studio Operations Reid Cline on June 13, states: "If anyone wants to write to Disney to support them in light of the Southern Baptist Convention's condemnation yesterday, you may write to: Michael Eisner, c/o S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521-1010; (818) 560-2431."

Eisner is Disney's chairman and CEO. The e-mail is signed by a secretary in Cline's office at Disney, Brad Bergman, with the Internet address reading: "brad_bergman@studio.disney.com."

"We don't have any comment" was the response of a Disney spokeswoman after the corporate communications office there received a faxed copy of the e-mail appeal and a response by Bill Merrell, SBC Executive Committee vice president for convention relations.

Said Merrell: "It is yet another sad reflection of the state of Disney — that a Disney vice president's office must turn to the homosexual Internet crowd to

solicit support for the company's drift away from family values and its buckling to the homosexual-activist agenda.

"It is noteworthy that Disney cannot find support for its eroding morality among the vast majority of Southern Baptists, other evangelicals, and others who adhere to the family values that once made Disney great," Merrell said.

Elkins takes helm of Miss./Honduras partnership

Ed Elkins has been chosen to serve as fieldside coordinator for the Mississippi/Honduras Medical-Dental Partnership.

The Cleveland, Tenn., native has been active in the partnership for several years and has helped facilitate the work of medical-dental teams.

Elkins' wife Glenda is a Honduran who attends college and serves as part-time bookkeeper for the partnership.

Elkin's duties will include arranging location for teams, facilitating arrivals and departures, maintaining the mission house, supervising personnel, arranging documentation, and coordinating scheduling of projects.

Hussein's appeal slated for Sept. 15

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Robert Hussein, declared an apostate from Islam by a Kuwaiti religious court on May 29 for his Christian faith, filed an appeal of the decision on Saturday, June 29. The hearing for his appeal was set for Sept. 15.

Hussein was the subject of a June 27 news conference in which Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin denounced the ruling as a "miscarriage of justice" and appealed to all "freedom-loving Americans" to raise a cry.

Letters to the editor



Funds aid purchase

Editor:

We the members of West Carthage Baptist Mission deeply appreciate the funds that the Convention Board and Missions Committee gave in the purchase of land for a new church in Leake County.

We have also been humbled by the contributions of time and finances by the churches in our association. Because the city of Carthage refused to permit the use of the mobile chapel, we have had to use our associational building much longer than intended. However, Joe Abel, director of missions and our Missions Committee have been more than patient and generous to us during these difficult days.

Unlike many new churches, this mission was started to reach people of all socio-economic levels, and not by a faction or by disgruntled church members. God

has blessed us beyond our expectations, and our new building is now in progress.

Missions is the real heart of most Southern Baptists and we have been the witness of this strong influence working in the lives of individuals and churches. Again, thank you to those who gave to our State Missions Offering and those who have given of themselves and their finances.

West Carthage Mission
Susan Kinton, treasurer
Jack Nazary, pastor

Praise for choir

Editor:

On Sunday, June 16, the Central Baptist Church of Bearden in Knoxville, Tenn., was privileged to have as our guests in both morning worship services the Mississippi All State Baptist Youth Choir and Orchestra. This fine group of young men and women, under the

leadership of Richard Joiner of Mississippi College and David Young of William Carey College, provided instrumental and vocal music for worship and praise during our worship services.

I explained to our people that these young people were the cream of the crop from Mississippi Baptist churches. They were recommended by their pastors and their minister of music. It was clear from their leadership that they not only used their wonderful talents vocally and instrumentally but their music came from their hearts as they were young people committed to Jesus Christ.

Many of our families were privileged to house them on Saturday night prior to Sunday, and this also proved to be a very enjoyable and positive experience.

I want to thank the Mississippi Baptist Convention and all of the churches that had young people represented and especially the parents of these fine young men and women for their valuable contribution to our worship on June 16. One of our members commented that we live in a day and time when one or two young people can do bad things and make headlines. It was refreshing to see over 90 young people share their talents in a positive way in a worship experience and make us all feel better about the future.

Mississippi Baptists have every reason to be thankful and proud for this fine representation of your Convention and churches. Thank you for sharing them with us while on tour.

Larry W. Fields, pastor
Knoxville, Tenn.

Just for the Record

Mt. Zion Church, Osyka, will celebrate its 158th anniversary on July 28. Sunday School will be held at 9:30 a.m.; worship services, at 10:30 a.m. with guest speaker Gary Fuller, Pike Association director of missions. Gina Mitchell, Chante Rhodus, and Melissa Wallace will provide special music; the Magnolia State Quartet, will perform in a 1:30 p.m. music service. Covered dish lunch will be served at noon. Earl Warren is pastor.

Mississippi College's Office of Continuing Education will offer "Kids College," July 22-26. Sessions are from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily.

For more information call (601) 925-3301.

Pontotoc Church Staff Golf Classic will be held at Pontotoc Country Club, Pontotoc, Aug. 12. The registration deadline is July 29. The \$30 registration fee includes green fee for 27 holes, golf cart rental, and lunch. For more information call (601) 489-7534; (601) 844-0675 before 5 p.m., or 489-6361 after 7 p.m.

Allen and Vickie Harris will be in concert at Pocahontas Church, Jackson, July 28 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 982-2305.

Highland Church, Laurel, plans women's conference

Highland Church, Laurel, will sponsor an area-wide women's conference on Aug. 2-3.



Griffin

Annie Chapman, author and wife of Christian musician Steve Chapman, will be the keynote speaker for the conference.

Angela Griffin of Laurel will be music leader.

Participants may choose three of 20 seminars under different leaders, with such topics as Single Parenting, Victorious Christian Living, Stress Management, Developing a Missions Lifestyle, and Dealing with Grief.

Conference times are: Aug. 2, 6:30-9:30 Chapman

p.m.; Aug. 3, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$25, including Saturday lunch and snack. For more information, call the church at (601) 428-8493.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

July 18, 1996

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

New Prospect Church Attends Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Youth Weeks

The key word for New Prospect Baptist Church seems to be NEW. They have several changes that are taking place, one of which is in their youth department. This summer they visited Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Youth Week for the very first time.

Gulfshore hosts six youth week conferences attended by 500 teenagers in each conference. The retreats take place during the month of June and consist of "small group" activities, "family group" devotions, and evening worship services.

The theme of this year's retreat was "Set to Serve." It emphasized serving other people while being of service to Christ. Educational, inspirational, and recreational programs were taught by the small group leaders through activities that could be applied to everyday life.

According to Rosie Christy, a 17-year-old from Tishomingo County High School, "The atmosphere is great here because we can be with people with the same goal as ourselves—to grow closer to God." And youth sponsor Janice Davis said, "We're new to this, we've learned a lot about how to grow a youth group."

Another change that New Prospect is going through is one of leadership. They have hired Mark Mathis, a 19-year-old from Corinth, to serve as their youth minister. He does this on weekends and will be attending Northeast Mississippi Community College during the week in the fall. Mathis said, "We have started taking part in local activities and we just wanted to go away to do something. We chose

Gulfshore because it isn't as far as some of the other camps, and it isn't as costly either."

New Prospect brought 11 youth and four sponsors and they hope to return to Gulfshore next summer.

Article by Tisha P. Mercer, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Public Relations Intern



PLAYING THE GAME

With Purpose & Passion



1996 Sunday School Leadership Conference
September 6-7, 1996

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian, Miss.

If you would like more information about this conference, contact the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

Harrisburg Baptist Church Attends Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Youth Weeks

Harrisburg Baptist Church in Tupelo has an exciting schedule planned for its youth group this summer. One event that kicked off their summer activities was Youth Week at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian, Miss.

These four day retreats consist of "small group" activities, "family group devotions," and evening worship services. When the churches arrive at Gulfshore the kids are assigned to small groups that they are to meet with for the remainder of the retreat. Their time in "family group" devotions allows them to get to know each other on a smaller scale and to have more personal attention from their camp counselor. Harrisburg has been attending Youth Weeks for 18 years bringing 40-50 jr. high students each year. Sue McCalister, the youth director at Harrisburg for the past 23 years, said "I really enjoy bringing my jr. high students to Gulfshore, it gives me a chance to get to know them better and to welcome them into the youth group. The kids refer to Gulfshore as their "Castle on the Bay." She said the only problem is that she doesn't have enough vehicles to bring the senior high along too. Harrisburg

takes part in many different mission trips and retreats throughout the summer, but Gulfshore Youth Weeks is a favorite kick off.



Passons Serves As Guest Musician for Gulfshore Youth Weeks

The term Avalon means heaven. It is a mythical place in *The Tales of Narnia* where kings and children went. To music artist Michael Passons, Avalon is more than just a myth. It is the name of the four member singing group, made up of two men and two women, that he will be traveling with beginning September 8, 1996. They will be traveling all over the country touring with contemporary Christian music artist Twila Paris.

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly had music artist Michael Passons leading in the services of Youth

Weeks during the month of June. Youth weeks are made up of six youth conferences attended by 500 teenagers in each conference. The retreats consist of "small group" activities, "family group" devotions, and evening worship services.

Passons is a Yazoo City native and a Mississippi College graduate. He received his degree in church music with an emphasis in piano.

After graduation he toured with the group "Living Word" for two summers. He then moved to Nashville to work with James Stroud as an assistant concert producer. Stroud has been instrumental in producing concerts for country artists such as Clay Walker, John Anderson and Clint Black, to name a few.

As Stroud began to see and hear the talent that Passons possessed, he insisted on funding and producing Passon's first independent album, "Desert Road."

Even though Passons now calls Nashville home, he doesn't spend a lot of time there. Much of his time is spent leading retreats in Christian music and holding concerts. Passons said, "No matter where I am, my main goal is to bring others to Christ or to a closer walk with Christ through music."

Article by Tisha P. Mercer, Gulfshore Public Relations Intern

Let's pray this day for...

July 19-August 15, 1996

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"Do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

For the 40 churches who had their church buildings burned recently. Pray for the ones who committed these criminal acts and for the churches as they seek to rebuild.

Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, July 22-26, Central Hills Retreat, sponsored by the Brotherhood; GA Summer Camp, July 22-26, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by WMU.

For a sensitivity to those who hurt. Often we aren't concerned about other people because we don't know they are hurting. Pray that we can observe when people are hurting and minister to them.

Pray that men will be nurturers too and that both women and men will put energies into becoming "good" as God planned from the beginning.

Town & Country Church Music Conference, Center Terrace BC, Canton, 25th-26th, sponsored by Church Music Department. Church Media Library Leadership Conference, July 25-27, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by Department of Broadcast Services. Training All Church Leaders, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Town & Country Church Music Conference, Grace BC, Vicksburg, 26th-27th, sponsored by Church Music Department. Youth Night, July 26-27, Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson, sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Centrifuge II, July 27-August 1, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by Baptist Sunday School Board.

That God will place people on your heart who need prayer and that you will sense God's nearness when you pray.

Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, July 29-August 2, Central Hills Retreat, sponsored by Brotherhood.

Church Leader Training, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union.

Church Leader Training, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union.

Church Leader Training, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union. Town & Country Church Music Conference, August 1-2, Holly BC, Corinth, sponsored by Church Music Department. Church Leader Conference, August 1-3, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Town & Country Church Music Conference, August 2-3, FBC, Guntown, sponsored by Church Music Department. Associational Leader Training, August 2-3, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union.

Centrifuge III, August 3-8, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by Baptist Sunday School Board.

Day of Prayer for World Peace. Pray that it will truly be a day of prayer (Christian Action Commission Emphasis).

There are currently 575 churches enrolled in the Watchman Revival-Prayer Network. Pray that the goal of 1,000 churches will be reached by the end of 1996.

That revival will break out in churches across North America and throughout the world.

Pray that you will have a spiritual hunger for the Word, prayer and close fellowship with several Christian friends.

Town & Country Church Music Conference, August 8-9, Sunrise BC, Carthage, sponsored by Church Music Department.

Town & Country Church Music Conference, August 9-10, Louin BC, Louin, sponsored by Church Music Department.

Language Missions Day. There are 500,000 ethnic language-culture Southern Baptists who worship and study the Bible in 106 languages and dialects.

The 57 language-culture churches, missions and ministries reaching out to Chinese, Choctaw, Filipino, Hispanic, Korean and Vietnamese people in the U.S.

For the 7,000 language-culture churches and mission units across the U.S., its territories and Canada that our Home Mission Board helps.

The Second Baptist Church of Caxias do Sul, Brazil. It has been organized two years and has recently called Claudio Pereira Dias as pastor of its 20 plus members. Missionary John Vaughn has ministered to this church for some time.

Two young couples, Vander and Solange and Moacir and Salete, to whom John and Kathy Vaughn have been witnessing. Pray that they will realize their need of salvation and let Christ complete His saving work in them.

The seven pastors in the Northeast section of the state of Rio Grand do Sul, Brazil. Pray that they can meet monthly and eventually organize into an association in the area.



AUGUST — SEPTEMBER

The numbers indicate the day of the month and the year of birth.
For instance, 8-76 means August 8, 1976.

AUGUST

5-77 Mr. Everett D. Presley, 3513 36th Street, Meridian, MS 39301; Parents: Johnny & Beth; Religious Education, SERVE IN SOUTH BRAZIL

6-83 Miss Audra C. Funderburk, Ecole Baptiste, B.P.

1171, Bouake 01, COTE D'IVOIRE; Parents: Ricky & Lori; Mission Administration

12-78 Miss B. Tracy Thomas, Black Forest Academy, Postfach 1109, 7842 Kandern 1, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY; Parents: Robert & Beverly; Hospital Administration

18-82 Timothy Stamps, Apartado 2340, Managua, NICARAGUA; Parents: Keith and Penny Stamps; General Evangelism

19-89 Miss Andrea J. Bailey, Casilla 3168, Santa Cruz, BOLIVIA; Parents: Kenneth and Ruth; Theological Education

28-86 Mr. Ross E. Funderburk, P.O.Box 1085, Freetown, SIERRA LEONE; Parents: Ricky & Lori; Mission Administration

28-79 Mr. Sheridan Corey, 7336 Anela Place, Diamondhead, MS 39520; Parents: Charles & Patricia; Field Personnel Assistance

31-82 Mr. Mark W. Hendricks, Apartado 1010-7050, Cartago, COSTA RICA; Parents: Larry D. & Mary W.; General Evangelism

SEPTEMBER

2-87 Miss Laura Webb, Apartado 100, 2350 San Francisco des Dos Rios, San Jose, COSTA RICA; Parents: Elvin & Janet; General Evangelism

6-84 Mr. John Fox, UEC Baptists of Ukraine, 3-a, L. Tolstogo St, Kiev, 4, 252004, UKRAINE; Parents: Thomas & Tammy; General Evangelism

9-95 Miss Emily Hewitt, Baptist medical Centre, Box 50, Nalerigu, via Gam бага, GHANA; Parents: Earl & Mona; Medicine

11-82 Miss Ariel Austin Massey, Sucursal 5, Casilla de Correo 11, 1900 La Plata, ARGENTINA; Parents: Gregor & Karen; Music Promotion

12-84 Mr. Whitney W. Kliesch, Ecole Baptiste de Theologie, B. P. 4860, Lome, TOGO; Parents: Milton & Pamela; Theological Education

18-78 Miss Summers Dunaway, Caixa Postal 7087, 7169-970 Brasilia, DF, BRAZIL; Parents: Philip & Lara; Theological Education

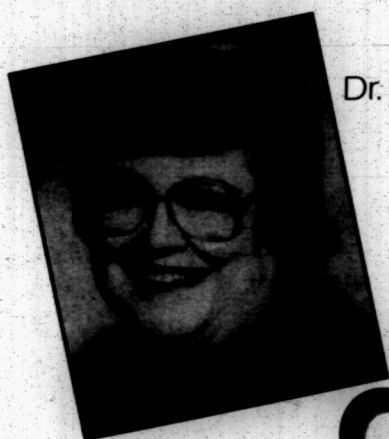
18-82 Miss April Smith, Casilla 223, 8300 Neuguen, ARGENTINA; Parents: Steve & Vidonia Smith; General Evangelism

22-87 Mr. Kyle Jones, 4 bix, Grande Rue, 54420 Saulxures-les-Nancy, FRANCE; Parents: Mike & Pam; General Evangelism

25-79 Mr. Ryan Kyzar, c/o Guy Henderson, 202 McDonald Drive, Clinton, MS 39056; Parents: Russell & Melinda; Music Promotion, SERVE IN COSTA RICA

25-86 Miss Stephanie Smith, Casilla 223, 8300 Neuguen, ARGENTINA; Parents: Steve & Vidonia Smith; General Evangelism

27-83 Miss Amy K. Lee, 52-31 Matsumidai, Ikoma-shi, 630-02 Nara-Ken, JAPAN; Parents: Henry & Linda; General Evangelism



Dr. Anne Davis

Madeline Manning Mims



Lee Ezell

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Dr. Anne Davis, Louisville, Ky., author, retired dean of Carver School of Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Lee Ezell, Newport Beach, Calif., nationally-known speaker on women's issues, called the "humorist therapist."

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If you would like to register for this conference, contact the WMU Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

STEPS IN THE CHURCH PLANNING PROCESS

- ✓ Elect and train the Church Leadership Team (Church Council).
- ✓ Resource: Church Leadership Team Handbook Product number 5201-18, Baptist Sunday School Board
- ✓ Order Church Design Handbook, 1996-97, (601) 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.
- ✓ Review or write your church Mission Statement.
- ✓ Select a few Priority Concerns for 1996-97.
- ✓ Set a few measurable goals for 1996-97.
- ✓ Correlate your church Calendar for 1996-97.
- ✓ Build your church budget for the new year.
- ✓ Present your plans to church for approval.

RESOURCES: 1996-97 Church Design Handbook, Church Administration Magazine, May 1996



**1996
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ADVANCED
SECRETARY
CERTIFICATION SEMINARS
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BASIC —
AUGUST 20-22, 1996
SANDY SIGMON, certified church secretary instructor for the Baptist Sunday School Board, and Administrative/Education Assistant, Atlanta Baptist Association, Atlanta, Ga.



ADVANCED —
AUGUST 20-22, 1996
BETTY HUGHES, certified church secretary instructor for the Baptist Sunday School Board, and Administrative Assistant at Trinity Baptist Church, Lubbock, Tex.

For registration information, contact the Church Administration and Pastoral Ministries Dept. at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

Handbell Leadership Seminar



**9:00 am - 4:00 pm
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Jackson**

September 20, 1996

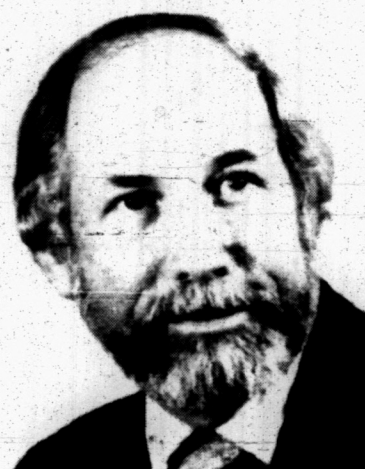
For more information, contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

Town and Country



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Friday, July 26, 9 a.m. - noon

Grace Baptist Church
Vicksburg
Friday, July 26, 6:30 - 9 p.m.
Saturday, July 27, 9 a.m. - noon

Area 2

Holly Baptist Church
Corinth
Thursday, Aug. 1,
6:00-9:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church
Guntown
Friday, Aug. 2, 6:30 - 9 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 3, 9 a.m. - noon

Area 6

Sunrise Baptist Church
Carthage
Thursday, Aug. 8,
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 9, 9 a.m. - noon

Montrose Baptist Church
Montrose
Friday, Aug. 9, 6:30 - 9 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 10, 9 a.m. - noon

For more information about the Church Music Conferences, contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

Homecomings

Old Hebron, New Hebron: July 21; 175 years old; 11 a.m.; dinner at noon; Leon Wallace, Silver Creek, guest speaker; John Sapp, Collins, music; Randy Gardner, pastor.

Macedonia, Brookhaven: July 21; worship and memorial service, 10:30 a.m.; covered dish, noon; 6:30 p.m. service; Donnie Guy, Gulfport, guest speaker; Robert H. Perry, pastor.

First, Pontotoc: July 28; 10:40 a.m. service; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; former member day, other activities include placing of new time capsule in observance of 150th anniversary; Jimmy Porter, McComb, guest

speaker; W.H. Sims III, pastor.

Main Street, Goodman: July 28; 10 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; Ray Allen, Clinton, guest speaker; Sandra and David Young, Laurel, guest singers; Lavon Moore, interim pastor.

Mt. Olivet, Forest: July 21; worship service, 11 a.m.; covered dish dinner on the grounds, noon; no night service; revival services, July 22-24; Randall Creel, Hazel Church, guest speaker and evangelist; Tammy Bell, guest singer; Travis Polk, pastor.

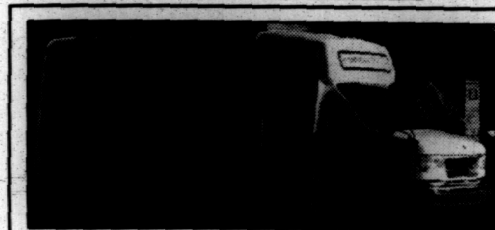
Mt. Vernon, Liberty: July 21; 149th anniversary; worship service, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon singing, 1:30; no night service; Bobby Williamson, Brandon, guest speaker; Brian Hill, pastor.

First, Satartia: July 21; 11 a.m.; covered dish, 12:30 p.m.; singing, 2 p.m.; Paul Stupka, Benton, guest speaker; James K. Allgood, pastor.

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Thursday, July 18, 1996

Revival Dates

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

Mt. Pisgah (Rankin): July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Max Price, Bruce, evangelist; Jan Jones, music; John Price, pastor.

Learned (Metro): July 18-21; 7 p.m. nightly; Sunday, 11 a.m.; "End-Time Events" study led by Sam Mason, pastor.

Mission Hill, Wesson: July 21-26; homecoming, Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 10:50 a.m., lunch in fellowship hall, 1:15 p.m. service; revival, Mon.-Fri., 6:50 p.m. nightly; Bendon Ginn, evangelist; Tommy Purvis, pastor.

Terry's Creek, Magnolia: July 21-26; homecoming, July 21; 125th anniversary; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds, noon; Jubilation Quartet, 2 p.m.; revival services, July 21-26; James Sanders, evangelist; Bernie Johnson, music.

Kilmichael (Montgomery): July 21-24; 7 p.m. nightly; Ed Lacy, Mobile, Ala., evangelist; Joe Styron, Vaiden, music; Gary A. White, pastor.

New Hope, Foxworth: July 21-26; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Tommy King, Columbia, evangelist; Tom Mercier, Prentiss, music; Kent Campbell, pastor.

New Salem, McCall Creek: July 21-25; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner, noon; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Mike Grenn, Silver Creek, evangelist; Neal Wigley, Brookhaven, music; Robert M. Sanders, pastor.

First, Satartia: July 21-26; 7:30 p.m.; Paul Stupka, Benton, evangelist; Wanda Woods, First

Church, music; James K. Allgood, pastor.

Macedonia, Brookhaven: July 21-24; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Donnie Guy, Gulfport, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, Agricola, music; Robert H. Perry, pastor.

Ebenezer (Attala): July 21-24; 11 a.m. Sunday, and 7:30 p.m. nightly; Dewitt Cutts, pastor emeritus, Bethsaida Church, evangelist; Tommie Overstreet and Kenneth Mangrum, music; Harvey Overstreet, pastor.

Rock Hill, Brandon: July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Charles Gentry, Clinton, evangelist; Tim Canterbury, pastor, Rock Hill Church, music.

Pleasant Hill, New Hebron: July 21-24; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Lloyd Wilson, Florence, evangelist; Charles S. Rodgers, Crystal Springs, pastor, music.

New Sardis, Mt. Olive: July 28-Aug. 2; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; William Vail, Oxford, evangelist; Charles Guy, pastor.

New Hope, Sumrall: July 28-Aug. 2; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:15 p.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; George Berger, director of missions, Lebanon Association, evangelist; Bob Thames, Seminary, music; George Gerald Aultman, pastor.

First Church, Runnelstown, Petal: July 28-Aug. 2; Sunday, Sunday School, 9 a.m., 10 a.m.

worship, and dinner in fellowship hall; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; J. E. Sims, evangelist; Bradley White, music; Henry Freeman, pastor.

Palestine, Harrisville: July 28-31; services, 7 p.m.; Roger Lee, Braxton, evangelist; Carl Burns, pastor.

Improve, Columbia: July 28-Aug. 2; regular services, Sunday; Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Jack May, Memphis, evangelist; J.R. Walley, Lucedale, music; Ronald Bunch, pastor.

Gillsburg (Mississippi): July 28-31; 7 p.m. nightly; Gary Bowl-in, Brandon, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, Agricola, music.

Society Hill (Jeff Davis-Covington): July 29-Aug. 2; Robert Dunn, Monticello, evangelist; Russell Williamson, Oakvale, music; Glen Nelson, pastor.

Corinth, Magee: July 28-Aug. 2; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., and dinner on grounds followed by afternoon singing with The BibleTones; weekday services, 7:30 p.m.; Rudy Ring, Paragould, Ark., evangelist; Glen Floyd, Mendenhall, music; Lynsol Richmond, pastor.

Line Creek, Morton: July 21-26; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon dinner; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; J.B. Cotton, Columbia, Tenn., evangelist.

New Hope, Mt. Olive: July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on the grounds, and afternoon service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; W.A. Fordham, Petal, evangelist; Alton Robinson, music; Mark Robinson, pastor.

Arlington, Bogue Chitto: July 21-26; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Rick Kennedy, McComb, evangelist; Thomas Walsh, McComb, music; Bob Lynch, pastor.

Springfield, Natchez: July 24-28; 7 nightly; R.C. Branch, evangelist; homecoming July 28; 9:45 a.m., dinner on the grounds followed by the Cole Family singing; Gene Roland, pastor.

Union, Seminary: July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon covered dish meal, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Berry, Brandon, evangelist; Bob Thames, Seminary, music; Lamar Williams, pastor.

McAdams (Attala): July 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Grady Collins, Philadelphia, evangelist; Louis and Mary Beth Burghard, Crystal Springs, music; James E. Young, pastor.



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Uniform When trouble comes



By Jim Phillips
Psalm 34

We all learn a great deal about people the moment they open their mouths. It could be generally said that what comes out of the mouth the most is what that person deems as their personal area of authority. I have known preachers who could talk from the heart about family matters because they were family men themselves. I've heard a doctor talk about surgery, and it was obvious he had done this personally. You can gain insight for your hobby by listening to one who enjoys it like you do.

In the psalm under consideration, the psalmist speaks from a heart that had been into and through difficulty with God at his side. His writing would suggest that his experience had taught him more about the faithfulness of God than he would have known otherwise. He thus spoke of how God could be trusted.

From the testimony of the tested, we can gain hope for our own struggles. Though we're not sure what the psalmist had experienced, we do know he wanted to share his victory for the benefit of others. He referred to himself as a poor man who called out to God and God responded (v. 6). This sounds much like the words of Jesus when He declared, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). It is often when a person is stripped of everything except their desire to call out to their Creator that they benefit most. When we come to the end of our rope we can still reach out to God and He answers.

Notice that he acknowledged that his struggle had resulted in fear upon his life (v. 4). He was not ashamed to reveal his fragile inner spirit. Though he was one who walked with God, this didn't fully rid his life of anxiety and trouble. Being transparent allows us to identify that God chose people who struggle and often are afraid to be a blessing to others in their struggle. The apostle Paul reminds us that when we've received the comfort of God we're to turn and comfort others (2 Cor. 1:4). Of course the challenge to modern day Christians is to not wait for the need to be consoled by God before seeking a relationship with him. Our maturity in Christ will become evident in the greatest time of need.

Because of God's expressive love of Jesus hanging on the cross for us, we need never doubt his love for us. That was settled once and for all on Calvary. Therefore refuge for those in turmoil can be found in a God who is good (v. 8). When we reverence God because we walk with him out of a loving commitment, our hearts will grow to the point of more fully trusting him. We'll come to know him as a God who seeks our absolute best even in the event of tragedy (v. 9).

Many a testimony has been built around the times when people experienced the evidence of God's unmistakable Presence. Right at the point of their greatest need, God provided. The hymn writer is right: "Just when I need him, Jesus is near." My own experience would underscore the fact that his comforting grace, though constant, rises to meet the current struggle. In verse 18, the psalmist speaks from a first person stand point about this time of broken-heartedness. Right in the middle of this heart-wrenching experience, God was near and dear. Seldom early but never late!

We would all do well to ponder his words in verses 19-22. When compared to the unrighteous (v. 21) who have nowhere and no one to turn to, the righteous have One who promises deliverance. We may have to suffer for a time but the song in our hearts will be restored. Many a follower of God can track their current status of growth to the last time God arose to meet their sinking heart. There may be no greater vision of God than to be flat on our backs, looking straight into the face of God. We then are forced to acknowledge our fragile selves and that is the point where God can redeem us from the hurt being thrust upon us. The plight might be physical, emotional, matrimonial or even spiritual. It matters not to God. He is faithful to the moment's need. His grace is sufficient and his Love constant. There is no greater experience as Christians than to refer back to a time in our lives when we felt as though the world had abandoned us only to find that God never does — nor will he ever.

Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

Bible Book Vision of God's throne



By Ronald Bishop
Revelation 4, 5

God on his throne (4:1-11). After John received the messages he recorded in the seven letters, he received a vision of heaven. The dominant theme of this vision seems to be simply that God is in control and deserves to be worshipped. John was invited by the same voice he had heard in 1:10 to look into God's plan. John beheld a throne in heaven with one seated on it. The description that follows leaves little doubt that John was writing about God. The throne of God was surrounded by elders whose faithfulness to God is indicated by white robes. From the throne issue forth lightning and thunder, signifying the great and terrible voice of God.

Around the throne also are found four creatures full of eyes. These creatures probably represent God's ability to know all. Persecuted Christians received assurance by knowing that God knew of their trouble. The creatures were able to fly and had as their constant job the unending praise of God. John's message probably was intended to remind Christians that God deserves our worship even in times of trouble. When the living creatures would sing praises to God, the twenty-four elders would fall down and worship God. The worship song was a reminder that only God deserves worship. John lived during a time when authorities forced their subjects to worship the emperor. John wanted his readers to know that some things, including one's faith, are worth dying for.

The search for one worthy (5:1-7). John then noticed in God's right hand a scroll. The scroll seems to contain God's plan for events that were happening and would happen later. In keeping with ancient custom, the scroll was sealed. In fact, the scroll was sealed with seven seals, probably meaning that it was sealed as thoroughly as possible. An angel shouted, "Who is worthy to open the seals?" Unfortunately, no one in heaven nor on earth came forth declaring to be worthy to open the scroll. John was greatly distressed that no one was worthy to open the scroll. This fact probably indicated to him both the general unworthy nature of humanity as well as the fact that, without someone to open the scroll, God's plan probably would not be accomplished. John was so disturbed that he began to cry. But then one of the elders comforted him, informing him that the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, had conquered and was worthy to open the scroll. No first-century Christian would have missed John's message. Among all the inhabitants of heaven and earth, only Jesus was worthy to be intimately involved in the plan of God. Only he was worthy to open the seals.

In praise of the Lamb (5:8-14). As if John's previous description of Jesus were inadequate, he referred to this worthy one as a Lamb appearing to have been slain. The common reference to Jesus as the Lamb of God would have been well-known. In John's vision, Jesus took the scroll from God, which prompted great celebration and singing in heaven. The elders, whose job it was to worship God, knew that this event deserved worship and praise as well. Along with the four living creatures, they fell down before Jesus, praising his feat of conquering death and temptation. John then noticed that an innumerable host of angels also was proclaiming the worthiness of Jesus to peer into the message of God for his people. Only he was worthy to do so. In fact, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea joined in the praise.

John's point seems to have been to remind early Christians under persecution that God is in control and Jesus is Lord. To deny the faith by worshipping the Roman emperor would be disastrous. Even at the price of death, Christians must persist in their devotion to God. The message for today is the same. God is in control of history even when we do not understand what is happening. Jesus has conquered death and deserves your praise, even if being a Christian is unpopular. To lose sight of these facts can be disastrous, as John will point out in later chapters.

Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College, Ellisville.

Life and Work Speaking wisely



By Cynthia Douglas
Proverbs 18-24

Words are a powerful tool because they have the power for good or evil. God spoke repeatedly about our speech. Our words reveal our character, therefore we need to evaluate our speech. Achieving excellence in everyday life begins with a right relationship with God. When the heart and mind are attuned to God, then believers will speak wisely.

Words have power (18:21; 21:23). The tongue has the power of life and death. Just as any powerful weapon needs to be highly guarded, so the use of the tongue needs to meet Godly standards. Our words can reflect the love of God or our words can be a destructive force. Much trouble can be avoided by controlling one's speech.

How would you evaluate your speech? Do your words reflect godly wisdom? Wise people use speech in helpful ways, thus avoiding harm for themselves and others.

Words can destroy (Prov. 4:24; 18:6; 20:19; 24:28). Perhaps you have played the childhood game "Gossip," in which children sit in a circle. The first child whispers a secret which is then passed to the next child. The last child usually reports an entirely different statement from the original. This game is such a harmless activity, but in reality, gossip generates conflict, turmoil, and pain.

Proverbs 20:19 cautions against associating with people who gossip. Proverbs 24:28 declares we are not to bear a false witness against our neighbor. Proverbs 18:6 says we even invite a beating when we talk like an unwise person. Verbal abuse, lying, ridicule, and harassment are destructive forces and signal the user does not have a right relationship with God.

Words can help (Prov. 12:25; 16:24; 15:1). Three specific ways in which words can help are given. First, words can cheer an anxious person. Second, pleasant words bring soothing and healing. Third, a gentle answer turns away anger.

The use of the tongue is an important subject in the Bible. Words communicate our thinking and our emotions. God intended our speech to be glorifying to him and a blessing to our fellowman. Kind words bring a sweet comfort and can still the storm of rage. A wise saying states that God gave us two ears and one tongue so we can listen twice as much as we talk.

Words reveal character (Prov. 15:2, 4, 28). Just as what kind of water comes from a hose is determined by the source it is connected to, even so the words of our mouths reflect the source in our lives. Proverbs 15:2 contrasts a wise person and a foolish person. A wise person speaks appropriate words at the right time. The foolish person "gushes folly" or just pours out a torrent of words.

In 15:4, the "tree of life" refers to refreshment. The opposite of which is the deceitful, deliberately lying tongue. Verse 28 cautions us to think first and speak later. We are instructed to weigh our answers, thus avoiding foolish responses. Note the contrast given when this teaching is disobeyed. In contrast, the evil mouth is described as gushing evil. Thus a person has two options. First, out of the righteous man comes careful, well thought responses. Second, man is given the freedom to speak without thinking, but note the person is called "mouth of the wicked" (v. 28).

Words reveal the inner life of a person. Therefore, a right relationship with God will produce wise speech. God intends for our words to be wise and helpful, never used to harm and destroy. Why is your speech important to God? Because it is like a mirror, it reflects the real you. How do I learn to speak wisely? By obeying God's Word and praying for guidance, believers are able to use speech wisely.

Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village



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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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(to be continued)

Summer Activities



Jeremy Burt receives cockpit instruction during Aviation Camp.



Twenty-one Baptist Children's Village young people participated in a week-long Aviation Camp sponsored by the NFL Retired Players Association. President of the Association, Eagle Day, was on hand to award young people their certificates. Instructor for the week was Mark Rice, former Air Force pilot and honored teacher at Stringer High School. In addition to classroom time, young people enjoyed meeting members of the Hurricane Hunters squad, touring the Naval Air Space in Meridian and flight training at the Madison Airport. During the graduation ceremony, young people launched rockets which they assembled under the direction of instructor Mark Rice.

Garaywa means missions education, summer fun

Over 2,000 girls attend camp during summer of 1996



Camp Garaywa, Mississippi Baptists' Girls in Action (GA) campground in Clinton, will play host during eight weeks this summer to more than 2,000 young women and 38 counselors, in addition to a number of adult meetings and seminars scheduled around the camp weeks.

Sarah Burnett (left photo, left) of Mount Zion Church, Columbus, shows off her new Garaywa T-shirt to fellow camper Rachel Kinard, who attends First Church, Russellville, Ky.

The girls, surrounded by flags of the countries of the world,

were talking outside a Garaywa conference room where world missions were being discussed.

Meagan Taleisnik (below left photo, left) of First Church, Byram, and Lacey Roberts (below left photo, center) of Wesson Church, Wesson, get advice from camp counselor Jennifer Cottingham of Agricola Church, Lucedale, on designing their quilt square for one of the 16 quilts the girls will make this summer. The quilts will then be donated to the poor and to Brantley Center, a Southern Baptist-sponsored homeless shelter in New Orleans.

Understanding teamwork is an important part of the training the girls receive at Garaywa. Angela Washington (below right photo, standing at left), of Byhalia Church, Byhalia, and Keri Patrick (below right photo, standing at right), of Corinth Church, McGee, press their hands together while teammates pass through.

Teammates include (from left) Stephanie Kimbrough, Byhalia Church, Byhalia; Lacy Hobbs, Crossgates Church, Brandon; Brittany Nickoles and Jessica Dyess, New Hope Church, Columbus; and Angie Doss, First Church, Brookhaven.

Campers also enjoy the Garaywa Adventure Course. Lacy Windham (right photo, on rope

swing), of Briarhill Church, Florence, swings wide after a big push-off provided by some of her new friends.

Camp Garaywa is managed by the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

Camp Garaywa is supported by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, WMU special funds, and user fees.

For more information on Garaywa programs, contact WMU at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



capsules

BAPTIST EDUCATORS VISIT ARABIC CAMPUSES: IFRANE, Morocco (BP) — A consortium of Southern Baptist educators has established ties with Arabic campuses in North Africa in hopes of exposing their own campuses to an Islamic culture that is often misunderstood and even feared. An eight-member team from Cooperative Services International Educational Consortium (CSIEC) visited campuses in four cities of Morocco to discuss exchanges of students and faculty members. CSIEC is a group of 43 Southern Baptist colleges and universities that have joined forces to create academic links between their schools and campuses overseas. "The world is shrinking faster every day. All endeavors are becoming global in scope," said Thomas Corts, president of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. "Students delight in the varieties of cultures and customs and will be at a disadvantage without that awareness."

BARBADOS SCHOOL GRADUATES 100TH: BARBADOS, West Indies (BP) — Barbados Baptist College produced its 100th graduate June 7. The two-year Bible college has trained pastors for the entire Caribbean area since its inception in 1977. Ninety of its graduates remain in active Christian service, said college principal Lambert Mills. The college was started by Foreign Mission Board missionaries Bill and Elba Womack, now retired, and continues as a ministry of Southern Baptist missionaries in the Windward Islands. The school relies heavily on Southern Baptist volunteers for faculty and maintenance needs.

ALIVE 93.5 NETS BIG RESULTS: CLINTON — Mississippi College-owned and -operated adult contemporary Christian radio station Alive 93.5 (WHJT-FM) now broadcasts its programming live over the Internet. Using Progressive Network's "Real Audio" compression technology, the 6,000-watt commercial station can now be heard from anywhere in the world by a listener connected to the Internet. The station's extended reach and potential for impact on distant listeners is quickly becoming clear. Connections are being logged from such diverse places as Brazil, London, California, Chicago, Georgia, Guam, and South Africa. Those interested in "tuning in" to Alive 93.5 on the Internet can get more information via the World Wide Web at <http://www.mc.edu/~alive935>.

VBS attendance set at 3 million

NASHVILLE (BP) — Vacation Bible Schools (VBS) in Southern Baptist churches in 1995 attracted more than 3 million people and resulted in the discovery of almost half a million Sunday School prospects, according to statistics recently released by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

According to the Annual Church Profile, 28,196 churches reported conducting VBS last year, with a total attendance of 3,146,054.

According to these records, 485,862 Sunday School prospects were discovered and 54,067 people accepted Christ during last year's Bible schools.

Becky Martin, a VBS consultant for the board, said the actual numbers of decisions and prospect discoveries were likely "significantly higher" since many churches did not return their VBS reports.

"We're really trying to encourage churches conducting VBS this summer to fill out and return these reports," she said.

"It's not that we're hung up on numbers, but these records speak to the continued effectiveness of VBS."

"What other program or event can result in these kinds of decisions and prospects in a five-day period? Last year's numbers show that we can't afford to put

VBS on the back burner."

Again, Martin said the actual numbers were likely much higher because of unreturned VBS reports.

Another interesting statistic, she said, is that 56% of last year's Bible schools were held at night.

"That says to me that churches are finding VBS to be an effective avenue in reaching people, so they're willing to schedule it in the evenings if they can't find people to serve during the day. Flexibility is the key."

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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GDE EQFAF HAF RPUF PO NPD EQHE GFWBFLF
KPE, OPA YFRDR XKFS OAPU EQE GFCBKKBKC
SQP EQFN SFAF EQHE GFWBFLFJ KPE, HKJ SQP
RQPDWJ GFEAHN QBU.

YPQK RBT: RBTEN-OPDA

This week's clue: K equals N.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: James Four: One.

Baptist Record

July

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